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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II
EDISON, NEW JERSEY 08837

DATE:

SUBJECT: Documentation of the Verbal Authorization for a Removal Action Restart and for an exemption to continue removal activities beyond the 12 month statutory limitation for Removal Actions at the Bossert Manufacturing Site, Utica, Oneida County, New York

FROM: *[Signature]*
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Removal Action Branch

TO: George Pavlou, Director
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THRU: *[Signature]*
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Removal Action Branch

Site ID #: S7

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum is to document the verbal authorization for a Removal Action Restart to conduct removal activities at the Bossert Manufacturing Site (Site) in Utica, Oneida County, New York. On May 2, 2003, William McCabe provided verbal authorization of \$50,000 for additional mitigation contracting work to restart the removal activities to address an area of the Site with elevated levels of PCBs. The area consists of a concrete pad with very high levels of PCBs and demolition debris commingled with soil adjacent to the concrete pad. A sample collected from the concrete pad revealed a PCB concentration of 10,000 parts per million (ppm). In addition, approximately forty wooden timbers are present near the pad with PCB contamination up to 800 ppm. Because more than 12 months has elapsed since the start of the initial removal activities at the Bossert facility, this authorization also provides an exemption to continue the removal activities beyond the 12 month statutory limitation.

The Site is located at 1002 Oswego Street in the City of Utica, New York. In response to releases of PCBs from equipment at the Site, EPA has conducted two removal actions previously, the first in 1987-1988 and the second in 1997-1998. The initial removal action included extensive actions to remove hazardous substances identified inside a now-demolished building at the Site, storage of PCB-contaminated materials in a secure "vault" area within the Site buildings and decontamination actions throughout the Site. The subsequent removal action addressed the high levels of PCBs found primarily within the interiors of the Site buildings by,

among other things the removal and off-site disposal of the stored solid and liquid wastes, and cleaning the contamination from floors and walls by pressure washing and other techniques. After EPA's removal activities, the Site buildings were demolished by the City of Utica. Based upon the location of the contaminated pad and other contaminated materials, it is likely that they were associated with the vault area which had been used during prior EPA removal activities to store the PCB- contaminated materials.

The City of Utica discovered the elevated concentrations of PCBs during its demolition of the buildings. The demolition debris was tested for PCB contamination by O'Brien and Gere, a NYSDEC contractor who characterized and segregated the debris into piles based on levels of contamination. The areas with significantly elevated PCB concentration include the slab, a small portion of the debris pile that is adjacent to the slab and the contaminated timbers. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation requested that EPA participate in removing the materials with elevated levels of PCBs. The Site, which is located in a predominantly residential neighborhood, has had a considerable amount of public interest over the past months focusing on the concerns of PCB exposure by contaminated dust and runoff.

The threats to human health include continued exposure to elevated concentrations of PCBs by airborne dust, through runoff from the Site and through direct contact by users of the site. These threats justify restarting the removal action to properly address the materials contaminated with very elevated levels of PCBs. The extremely high concentrations (up to 10,000 ppm of PCBs) pose an immediate risk to the health of people that reside within the area. Mitigation of these threats will eliminate the emergency conditions that would be associated with exposure to the contamination.

The restart removal action will include demolition of the concrete pad and characterization of the resultant debris, characterization of any soils adjacent to the pad as well as the existing demolition debris with very elevated levels of PCBs, and transportation/disposal of contaminated debris, soil and wood timbers. An Action Memo fully documenting the Removal Restart will be forwarded in the near future.

cc: T. Lieber, ORC-NYCSB
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